SEX-RATIO IN YPSOLOPHA LUCELLA (FABRICIUS) (LEP.: YPONOMEUTIDAE). – In his *Revised Handbook of British Lepidoptera* Meyrick writes "The male of this species appears to be very rare in collections, an unexplained peculiarity". The moth is rare and local and thus little known. I took two specimens at Rowney Wood, near Saffron Walden, in 1965 and three at Barton Mills, Suffolk, in 1978; these were all females. In July of this year I again came across it at Barton Mills, where it was common in a restricted area. I beat eight from the oaks, only one of which was a male. Thus 12 of my 13 specimens are female.

It is possible that the sexes really occur in equal numbers but only the female can readily be disturbed by day; if this is the case, it is the reverse of normal behaviour. It is perhaps more likely that it is on the way to becoming parthenogenetic. Larvae of this genus are easily obtained by beating and it would be interesting to rear *Y. lucella* in some numbers and record the sex-ratio. If, as with captured specimens, females predominate, one could then see whether virgins produce fertile ova and whether they retain sufficient libido to accept a male in copulation. On the other hand, one might find that males are necessary and being in short supply are polygynous.

Such experiments will have to wait until 1982; meanwhile, it would be interesting to hear the experiences of other collectors. – A. M. EMMET, Labrey Cottage, Victoria Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3AF. 9.viii. 1981.

HELOPS CAERULEUS L. (COL., TENEBRIONIDAE) IN NUMBERS UNDER BARK. – Mr. A. A. Allen in his recent notes on this species (1980, *Ent. Rec.* 92: 275-6; 1981, *ibid* 93: 119) commented that, in his experience, only the odd specimen was found under bark, the beetles apparently hiding themselves by day deep in the wood in which they develop, or else concealing themselves in some other way.

It is interesting that my very limited experience of the beetle is precisely the opposite of Mr. Allen's. My only encounter with the species has been in the marshes at Wrabness, Essex (TM 166315) in May, 1968 and 1969 (vide 1976, *Ent. Rec.*, 88: 41). The beetles were breeding in several dead willows and, on both occasions, stripping the bark almost anywhere on these revealed dozens of adults and some full-fed larvae clustered on the hard wood underneath. Mr. Allen's observations also indicate that the larvae develop in well-rotted wood, whereas the conditions under which I found mature larvae where almost identical to those under which one finds, for example, the larva of *Pyrochroa coccinea* (L.) viz. at the bark/cambium interface. – D. R. NASH, 266, Colchester Road, Lawford, Essex, C011 2BU.

[This seems a curious discrepancy, but might possibly be due to local differences in the microclimate, e.g. of humidity. I think, however, that it is more likely a matter of chance, in that loose bark is by no means always available in the beetles' habitats, but that when it does happen to be present it doubtless acts as a natural trap – apparently for larvae as well as adults. Actually the few